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Daily Highlights

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WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Foreign Ministers of Greece and former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia sign Interim Accord at Headquarters.

* Security Council expresses deep concern about intensified military activities by Bosnian parties and plight of civilian population.

* Secretary-General to meet with senior United Nations officials at Headquarters on Saturday to discuss diplomatic and military options in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

* Secretary-General expresses deep concern after violence at commune in north-west Rwanda leaves 109 people dead.

* Delegates at Fourth World Conference on Women report steady progress in negotiations on draft platform for action.

* UNHCR appeals for $28 million for repatriation and integration of Ethiopian and Somali refugees.

* Secretary-General calls for urgent support for implementation of Convention to Combat Desertification.

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The Foreign Ministers of Greece and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Karolos Papoulias and Stevo Crvenkovski, today signed an Interim Accord establishing a new relationship between the two countries. Announcing the signing at Headquarters, Special Envoy Cyrus Vance said the relationship would be based on concepts of international law and peaceful, friendly relations.

The Accord provides that each party will respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of the other, and confirms their common existing frontier as an enduring and inviolable international border. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will cease to use the symbol now on its national flag, while Greece will terminate the measures imposed by it on 16 February 1994.

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The steps necessary to fully implement the Accord will commence immediately, while the operative provisions will take effect 30 days from today. The parties will continue negotiations under the auspices of the Secretary-General with respect to the outstanding difference between them referred to in relevant Security Council resolutions.

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The Security Council today expressed deep concern about the intensified military activities by the parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as about the plight of the civilian population. In a statement to correspondents by its President, Francesco Paolo Fulci (Italy), the Council called on the parties to immediately cease all offensive military activities and hostile acts.

The Council reiterated that there could be no military solution to the Bosnian conflict. It expressed full support for the Geneva Declaration of Principles of 8 September, which provided a basis for negotiations for a lasting peace throughout the region.

There were reports today that Bosnian Government troops had taken the town of Donji Vakuf, in central Bosnia, from Serb forces. The United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) said it could not confirm those reports, but added that it had observed large troop movements in the region. Meanwhile, there was a high level of military activity in north-east Bosnia, with over 1,200 detonations recorded.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has invited Special Representative Yasushi Akashi, United Nations negotiator Thorvald Stoltenberg and General Bernard Janvier to meet with him at Headquarters on Saturday, a United Nations spokesman announced today. The meeting will discuss all options, both diplomatic and military, now on the table in Bosnia and Herzegovina, focusing on the Organization's future diplomatic role.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali spoke with the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Willy Claes, last night, the spokesman noted. He stressed that there was no difference of opinion between the two Secretaries-General on the overall tactics being pursued.

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The Secretary-General has expressed deep concern about an incident which occurred in Kanama commune, near Gisenyi in north-west Rwanda, during the night of 11 to 12 September. According to preliminary reports from the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), 109 people, including women and children, were killed in attacks at three sites in the commune. Infiltrators and saboteurs

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from Zaire have been active in the predominantly Hutu area over the past six months.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali welcomed the establishment of a Joint Investigation Team, including UNAMIR and Rwandan representatives and United Nations human rights monitors. He hoped the investigation would promptly ascertain the facts and recommend measures to prevent the recurrence of such an incident, which could only exacerbate tensions in the area and undermine efforts to promote peace and stability in Rwanda and the sub-region.

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Delegates at the Fourth World Conference on Women today reported further progress in negotiations on the draft platform for action. Regarding the issue of sexual rights, governments agreed that a child's right to information, privacy and confidentiality should be taken into account along with the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents. They also decided that women's human rights included the right to control over their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health.

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has been following the Conference very carefully, and has maintained regular contact with Special Adviser Ismat Kittani, according to a United Nations spokesman. He said the Secretary-General was very pleased with the way the Conference and the negotiations on the draft documents were developing.

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The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) today appealed to donor countries for $28 million for the repatriation and integration of Ethiopian and Sômali refugees through the end of the year. The agency said contributions to those programmes had been extremely poor and many activities had been curtailed. Without sustained support, it warned, progress might be set back and refugee camps in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Sudan would need funding indefinitely.

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With more than 900 million people living under the shadow of desertification and drought, the Secretary-General has called for urgent support for the implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification. In a report to the General Assembly, he said it was especially important to support immediate measures in Africa. Affected countries needed to launch a range of activities, most notably the preparation of new national action programmes.

The Secretary-General appealed to donors to increase multilateral funding for the Convention and to support sub-regional programmes and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Fund to Combat Desertification and Drought. He also appealed for the active involvement of non-governmental organizations in the Convention's implementation.

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